

# TASK FORCE PELICAN

Update for the week of:

**Monday – October 17, 2005**

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## Summary of Information:

- **Louisiana Recovery Authority-** Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco today announced the creation of the Louisiana Recovery Authority as the guiding agency to lead the state's rebuilding efforts. The authority will focus on key state issues such as housing, jobs, transportation, healthcare and education.
- **Bridge Loan Program for Louisiana Businesses-** On Monday, Oct. 17, Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco announced the details of a new \$10 million state bridge loan program for small businesses impacted by the recent hurricanes.
- **One Span of I-10 Across Lake Pontchartrain was Opened last Friday-** 17 days ahead of schedule
- **Transportation Updates-** Main Road/Bridge Closures
- **Environmental Updates-** DEQ tests show that Lake Pontchartrain has been largely unaffected by the pumping of floodwaters by New Orleans.
- **Power and Communication Utilities-** As of today **130,000** Louisianians are without power and **270,000** are without telephone services.
- **Oil & Gas Operations-** The Department of Natural Resources continues to assess critical energy needs in Louisiana.
- **Hospitals-** All hospitals are operational, except some hospitals in mandatory evacuation areas.
- **Education-** Superintendent of Education Cecil J. Picard laid out the needs of school systems across the state that need to be addressed in the November Special Session.
- **Information for Displaced Students, Faculty and Staff (College & University)**
- **Mandatory Evacuation Orders-** Curfew information
- **Fatalities-** At this time, state officials, working in conjunction with coroners from local parishes, have recovered **1,035** bodies.
- **Unemployment Insurance & Disaster Assistance-** The Louisiana Department of Labor has paid **\$181** million claims to **240,000** people, and Rita claims to **41,000**.
- **Louisiana Shelter Information-** Approximately **7,384** citizens remain in **135** in-state general population shelters, while **7,488** citizens remain in **184** general population shelters out-of-state.
- **Disaster Food Stamp Program-** The Louisiana Department of Social Services has provided approximately **\$197** million in benefits to **347,000** households impacted by Katrina.
- **Corrections Information-** As of Friday, DOC is coordinating the housing of **6,435** inmate evacuees.
- **Hunting Season Update-** Portions of the hunting areas and seasons that were previously closed due to the catastrophic impacts of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita are being reopened.
- **National Guard Soldiers-** There are approximately **12,000 National Guard soldiers** on the ground under the command of Governor Blanco.

## **Overview**

- **This is Day 49 since Hurricane Katrina made landfall and Day 23 since Hurricane Rita made landfall.**
- **Louisiana Recovery Authority**
  - Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco today announced the creation of the Louisiana Recovery Authority as the guiding agency to lead the state's rebuilding efforts. The authority will focus on key state issues such as housing, jobs, transportation, healthcare and education.
  - Chief of Staff, Andy Kopplin, will head the agency and a distinguished 24-member Board of Directors will oversee the authority and direct short and long term recovery plans.
    - Long-time president of Xavier University and respected New Orleans leader Dr. Norman Francis will chair the board. Walter Isaacson, journalist and author, president and CEO of the Aspen Institute and former chairman of CNN will serve as vice-chairman.

**The Governor today charged the board and the authority with specific tasks.**

**IN 7 DAYS:**

- Complete placement of staff in key senior positions, drawing primarily from existing state agencies;
- Set dates for preliminary planning meetings with parishes and/or regions;
- Initiate daily meetings with cabinet;
- Create preliminary list of short-term priorities;
- Identify a nationally recognized planning firm for the planning process;
- Schedule American Institute of Architects conference on the Louisiana recovery and rebuilding;
- Schedule U.S. Chamber of Commerce Redevelopment Summit;
- Set benchmarks for contracting performance and local hiring by FEMA, GSA, and Corps of Engineers.

**IN 30 DAYS:**

- Refine and present a comprehensive, unified State agenda for Congressional and State legislative actions to assist in the following areas:
  - Financial solvency of our most impacted parishes and local governments;
  - Prioritize federal appropriations to meet Louisiana's most critical recovery and redevelopment needs, including: levee reconstruction and improvement; transportation infrastructure; business assistance; job creation; permanent housing assistance; and Medicaid relief.
- Work with the Attorney General's office to enact a contractor and real estate fraud task force to educate and protect our citizens from predatory practices and prosecute offenders to the maximum extent of the law;
- Establish and implement a means of providing our citizens and communities with direct input into how their communities are rebuilt;
- Implement a communication plan to reach evacuees dispersed throughout the nation, to keep them informed of our progress and to bring them home;
- Propose a strategy for increasing in-state capacity for housing redevelopment;
- Construct a planning framework to reopen schools to serve returning populations;

- Initiate business recovery, retention, and attraction efforts;
- Provide the means to train and link displaced Louisiana residents with available recovery and redevelopment jobs.

#### IN 100 Days:

- Work with our federal partners to ensure that Congress and the Corps of Engineers deliver a plan for levee reconstruction and improvement so crucial investments and rebuilding decisions can be made;
  - Create and roll out a locally-driven, state-wide recovery plan to serve as the basis for prioritizing resources in the recovery period;
  - Craft a plan to relocate into permanent housing all residents currently in temporary lodging;
  - Restore critical governmental functions in affected parishes as needed to serve returning populations, to include judicial systems, public safety, sanitation, healthcare, and education for our children;
  - Create a strategy for the establishment of permanent public institutions - such as schools, hospitals, and healthcare clinic - that, beyond restoration, achieve the highest standards of performance;
  - Complete an environmental evaluation of damages caused by the hurricanes, and develop preliminary recommendations on how to proceed;
  - Design neighborhoods that meet the comprehensive needs of our citizens while restoring and enhancing the cultural and historic fabric of our communities.
- **Bridge Loan Program for Louisiana Businesses**
    - On Monday, Oct. 17, Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco announced the details of a new state bridge loan program for small businesses impacted by the recent hurricanes. The program will be secured by the state's \$10 million Rapid Response Fund and will act as a "gap funding" for businesses awaiting SBA loan approval, insurance reimbursement or other means of financial assistance.
  - **Opening of the I-10 Twin-Span**  
*Source: Department of Transportation and Development*
    - One of the Hurricane Katrina-damaged twin-spans was opened to traffic between New Orleans and Slidell on Friday, October 14. Extensive damage was repaired 17 days ahead of schedule at a substantial savings to the state. The project was done by New Orleans based Boh Brothers Construction Company, LLC.
      - To accommodate two-way traffic on the I-10 bridge, a traffic crossover has been constructed to allow I-10 westbound traffic in Slidell to move onto one lane of the repaired span. Another crossover on the New Orleans side of the bridge allows those westbound drivers to transfer back to the regular westbound interstate lanes.
      - Phase II plans include establishing traffic on the westbound span of the bridge by mid-January.
  - **Transportation Updates**  
*Source: Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development*
    - Eastbound twin-span bridge reopening ceremony Friday, Oct. 14, in Slidell

- Work in St. Bernard has been limited to clearance of signals from railroad lines and roadways. Limited restoration of power is possible within weeks, but only to a handful of signals where flooding was minimal.
  - The Black Bayou pontoon bridge on La. 384 is only open to marine traffic.
  - The Kelso Bridge on La. 27 cannot open to marine traffic but is functional for highway traffic.
  - The Grand Chenier Bridge and the Superior Bridge on La. 82 are open to highway traffic but closed to marine traffic.
  - The ferry Cameron II is back in operation during daylight hours only. Ferry service to Monkey Island has been suspended indefinitely.
  - The Madisonville Bridge on La. 22 will be closed to vehicular traffic on Saturday, 10/15/05 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The bridge will be closed to marine traffic at 8 a.m. Saturday 10/15/05 and will remain closed for approximately one week.
  - I-55 Service Road and the I-55 ramps at Ruddock are now open to all traffic.
  - CCCD: One ferry has been successfully pulled from the levee and delivered to a shipyard. The other ferry to be re-floated today. Estimated completion for repairs—Dec 1.
  - As of 10/13, NORTA is now operating on 13 routes, using 33 buses.
- **Environmental Updates**  
*Source: Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality*
    - DEQ has conducted 36,000 analyses for water quality in Lake Pontchartrain. No toxicity has been observed in 88 tests on fish. None of the 154 fish and crab samples harbored E. Coli. Lake Pontchartrain remains normal for this time of year and, to date, has been largely unaffected by the pumping of floodwaters from New Orleans. Field observations have reported large schools of fish striking at bait. Water sampling on the lake will continue for years to come.
    - DEQ will also be testing water quality at 20 sites in Calcasieu Parish this week utilizing the same sampling/analysis protocols as Lake Pontchartrain.
    - DEQ has conducted 558 underground storage tank inspections and has found no significant damage.
    - On Tuesday, October 18, DEQ will take part in global water quality activities as part of annual World Water Monitoring Day. WWMD is designed to increase awareness on the important role that water quality testing plays in protecting the world's watersheds. The event encourages citizens and students to experience monitoring first-hand and evaluate water quality conditions within their local watersheds.
    - The event will start at 10 am at a public launch located in Mandeville at the corner of Jackson Avenue and Lakeshore Drive. The media is invited to attend. For more information, contact Tiffany Dickerson at 225-219-3967.

- **Power and Communication Utilities**  
*Source: Louisiana Public Service Commission*

- Local, state and federal agencies are working with utility providers to restore power and communications. As of Monday, October 17, 2005 approximately **129,455** Louisianians are without **power**. Of that number, **122,312** outages are Katrina-related, and **7,143** are Rita-related.

- Approximately **269,278** Louisianians are without telephone service and **25,450** are without natural gas utilities.
- **Oil & Natural Gas Infrastructure Operations**  
*Source: Louisiana Department of Natural Resources*
  - As the Department of Natural Resources continues to assess critical energy needs in Louisiana, Secretary Angelle works with energy industry personnel to facilitate the reconstruction of damaged facilities.
    - Shutdown Oil Refineries- Katrina
      - ConocoPhillips (Belle Chasse)
      - ExxonMobil (Chalmette)
      - Murphy (Meraux)
    - Shutdown Oil Refineries- Rita
      - Citgo (Lake Charles)
      - ConocoPhillips (West Lake)
      - Calcasieu (Lake Charles)
    - Shutdown Natural Gas Facilities- Katrina
      - Yscloskey
      - Toca
      - Venice
    - Shutdown Natural Gas Facilities- Rita
      - Sea Robin
      - Grand Chenier
      - Stingray
      - Lowry
      - Sabine Pass
      - Barracuda
      - Cow Island
- **Hospitals**  
*Source: Louisiana Hospital Association*

All hospitals are operational, except some hospitals in mandatory evacuation areas.

- **Lake Charles Area**  
 All emergency care services are operational except for Walter Olin Moss Regional Medical Center and South Cameron Memorial Hospital.
- **Greater New Orleans Area**  
 East Jefferson General Hospital; West Jefferson Medical Center; Ochsner Clinic Foundation; Kenner Regional Medical Center; Lakeside Memorial Hospital; St. Charles Specialty Hospital; and Touro Infirmary opened with Strike Team
- **Lafayette Area**  
 ALL emergency care services in the Lafayette area are operational.
- Other hospital updates:
  - Military moved out of Meadowcrest Hospital

- **Louisiana School System**

*Source: Louisiana Department of Education*

- Superintendent of Education Cecil J. Picard testified before the joint House/Senate Education Committee Wednesday, October 12. Picard laid out the needs of school systems across the state that need to be addressed in the November Special Session.
- The most critical need is funding and Superintendent Picard told legislators about his efforts to secure federal funding and plans to change the state funding formula known as the "MFP."
- On Thursday, October 13, Superintendent Picard and U.S. Department of Education Secretary Margaret Spellings paid a joint visit to Cedarcrest-Southmoor Elementary School in Baton Rouge, a school that has taken in 70 of the 6,000 displaced students who have registered in the EBR school system.
- Picard and Spellings held a roundtable discussion with teachers, the principal of the school and the EBR superintendent to discuss the reality of education in Louisiana since Hurricanes Katrina and Rita struck our state.
- Picard and Spellings also visited classrooms who have welcomed displaced students.
- Secretary Spellings assured educators that she is actively seeking help for Louisiana schools for much needed funding and greater authority to issue education waivers requested by the Department of Education.

- **Schools Affected by Katrina**

*Source: Local School Districts*

- New Orleans public schools have announced that 3,000 parents have called their toll-free hotline to say that their children will go to school in November, if schools are able to reopen.
- The school board voted to open and charter the 8 schools that will open first on the West Bank.
- The toll-free number for parents to contact the school system is 1-877-771-5800.

- **Schools Affected By Rita**

*Source: Local School Districts*

- Calcasieu Parish has announced that all schools now have electricity restored and crews are at work repairing, cleaning, sanitizing and certifying schools for safe occupancy.
- They will give parents and teachers at least three days notice before schools.
- Cameron Parish schools have reopened their central office.
- The Cameron Parish school system is establishing a toll-free hotline to inform parents and students about the efforts to reopen schools.

- **Information For Displaced Students, Faculty and Staff**

*Source: Louisiana Board of Regents*

- The Louisiana Board of Regents requests that displaced propriety school students and proprietary school owners directly affected by Hurricane Katrina contact the Board of

- Louisiana public college and university faculty and staff who have not yet made contact with their campuses are urged to do so as soon as possible so in order to receive information, report on their employment intentions and, in so doing, assist their campuses in completing staffing plans for the current and upcoming semesters.
  - Displaced employees can register their contact information and assignment availability through an online registry available on the Board of Regents web site at [www.regents.state.la.us](http://www.regents.state.la.us), or call 1-800-272-8090 for information on contacting their campuses.
  - Campus staffing plans must be completed by Friday, October 28, so displaced faculty and staff are urged to make contact with their campuses no later than this date.
- **Mandatory Evacuation Orders- Rita**  
*Source: Louisiana Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness*

Mandatory Evacuation Orders are still in effect for 10 Southwest Louisiana Parishes.

- These parishes include:
  - ALL of Calcasieu Parish
  - ALL of Cameron Parish
  - ALL of Jefferson Davis Parish
  - PARTS of Vermilion Parish (low lying areas south of LA 14)
  - PARTS of St. Mary Parish (below the Intercoastal Waterway)
  - PARTS of Acadia Parish (South of LA 92)
  - PARTS of Iberia Parish (below US Highway 90)
  - PARTS of Iberville Parish (mobile homes only)
  - PARTS of Jefferson Parish (Lafitte, Crown Port, Barrataria & Grand Isle)
  - PARTS of Lafourche Parish (South of Leon Theriot flood gates)
- As of Monday, October 17, 2005, **62** parishes had declared **States of Emergency** due to effects of Hurricane Rita.

Acadia	Franklin	Rapides
Allen	Grant	Red River
Ascension	Iberia	Richland
Avoyelles	Iberville	Sabine
Beauregard	Jackson	St James
Bienville	Jefferson	St. Landry
Bossier	Jefferson Davis	St. Martin
Caddo	Lafayette	St. Mary
Calcasieu	Lafourche	Tangipahoa
Caldwell	LaSalle	Tensas
Cameron	Livingston	Terrebonne
Catahoula	Madison	Union
Claiborne	Morehouse	Vermillion
Concordia	Natchitoches	Vernon
Desoto	Orleans	West Baton Rouge
East Baton Rouge	Ouachita	West Carroll
East Carroll	Plaquemines	West Feliciana
Evangeline	Pointe Coupee	Winn
Lincoln	Assumption	Washington
St. Helena	St. John	St. Charles

East Feliciana	St. Tammany	
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- **Mandatory Evacuation Orders- Katrina**

*Source: Louisiana Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness*

Mandatory Evacuation Orders are still in effect for 4 Southeast Louisiana Parishes.

- These parishes include:
  - PARTS of Orleans Parish (low lying areas)
  - PARTS of Jefferson Parish (low lying areas)
  - PARTS of Plaquemines Parish (low lying areas)
  - PARTS of St. Bernard Parish (low lying areas)
- A curfew is in effect from 6 p.m. – 6 a.m. in Plaquemines and St. Bernard.
- A curfew is in effect from 2 a.m. – 6 a.m. in Orleans.

**64** parishes have declared States of Emergency due to the effects of Hurricane Katrina.

- **Fatalities\***

*Source: Department of Health & Hospitals & Louisiana State Police*

- At this time, state officials, working in conjunction with coroners from local parishes, have recovered **1,035** bodies. This is an increase from 1,025 recovered bodies reported on Oct. 12, 2005. These numbers have been reported to state officials by local coroners. A breakdown is as follows:

**842** are at the morgue in St. Gabriel

Parish Coroners:

Ascension – 9

Assumption – 3

East Baton Rouge – 72

Iberia – 6

Jefferson – 30

Lafourche – 2

Livingston – 5

Plaquemines – 3

St. Charles – 8

St. Tammany – 7

Tangipahoa – 26

Terrebonne – 19

West Baton Rouge – 3

- Last week, DHH reported 73 bodies had been released to families. Today, that number has been updated to **132** released bodies.
- The demographic breakdown of the deceased is as follows: African-American - 56 bodies (42% of total), Caucasian – 57 bodies (43%), Hispanic – 4 (3%), unknown – 15 (12%).
- Gender: 64 males (48%), 67 females (51%), 1 unknown (1%).
- Parish of Residence: Jefferson – 13 (10%), Orleans – 85 (64%), Plaquemines – 1 (1%), St. Bernard – 13 (10%), Washington – 1 (1%), unknown – 18 (14%), out of state – 1 (1%).



## **Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (additional information)**

### **Calcasieu Parish Health Unit to Resume Some Services**

The Calcasieu Parish Health Unit in Lake Charles will be providing Women, Infants and Children (WIC) nutrition services to those clients who have appointments on Friday, October 21, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Clients are being asked to keep their appointed times.

Staff from the Calcasieu Parish Health Unit in Lake Charles have been providing childhood immunizations from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Drew Park Recreation Building, located on South Ryan St. in Lake Charles near CHRISTUS St. Patrick Hospital, and will continue to do so until Friday, October 21.

The parish health units in Lake Charles and Sulphur will resume normal business operations beginning on Monday, October 24, 2005.

### **Hurricanes and Flooding Can Cause Problems With Onsite Sewage Treatment Systems**

In the aftermath of a hurricane or flooding, some homeowners may be experiencing difficulties with sewage systems not functioning properly.

If your sewage system was inundated with floodwater and operates with a “sump pump” or “aerator,” these components were most likely damaged and may need to be repaired or replaced. For inspection and repair, the Department of Health and Hospitals, Office of Public Health recommends that you contact a qualified maintenance provider.

Without the sump pump working, the tanks will fill and may cause backups of sewage into your home. Without the aerators working, the sewage is not being treated and your sewage system may be discharging partially treated or untreated sewage.

The following are indications of potential problems with wastewater systems:

- Alarms or lights going off
- Changes in the system's normal operating sound
- Changes in the normal color of sewage in the aeration chamber (a grayish-brown color could indicate a problem)
- Excess solids, foam or scum in the unit
- Plumbing backups
- Sewage odors in the house or yard

Maintenance is key to the performance of any sewage system, but when floodwaters inundate components, either mechanical or electrical, the need for proper maintenance to ensure proper functioning increases dramatically.

Citizens with questions about this process should contact their local parish health units to obtain a list of qualified maintenance providers, or the list can be viewed on the DHH Web site at:

<http://www.oph.dhh.louisiana.gov/sanitarianservices/wastewater/index.html>

- **Unemployment Insurance & Disaster Unemployment Assistance**

*Source: Louisiana Department of Labor*

- The Louisiana Department of Labor has paid more than **\$3 million** in Unemployment Insurance and Disaster Unemployment Assistance benefits to victims of Hurricane Rita. Hurricane Katrina claims have topped **\$181 million**.
  - Rita Claims Total **41,060**:

20,530- Jobless Benefits

14,866- Unemployment Insurance Claims

5,664- Disaster Unemployment Assistance Claims

▪ Katrina Claims Total **238,461**:

168,514- Unemployment Insurance Claims

69,947- Disaster Unemployment Assistance Claims

- **Louisiana Shelter Information**

*Source: FEMA & Louisiana Department of Social Services*

- State, local and federal officials are working vigorously to get Louisianians out of shelters and into transitional housing.
  - Approximately **7,384** citizens remain in **135** general population shelters in Louisiana.
  - Approximately **7,488** citizens remain in **184** general population shelters out-of-state.

- **Disaster Food Stamp Program**

*Source: Louisiana Department of Social Services*

- The Louisiana Department of Social Services has provided approximately **\$197** million in benefits to **347,000** households impacted by Katrina. About **142,000** households received **\$57** million in benefits as a result of Rita.
- Of the **2000 foster children** in the Katrina impacted area, **28** remain unaccounted for.

- **Corrections Information**

*Source: Louisiana Department of Corrections*

- The Orleans Parish Sheriff's Office will begin staging initial arrest and detention responsibilities starting Monday, October 17<sup>th</sup> at noon. DOC will assist in a supporting role as necessary.
- As of 10/14/2005, DOC is coordinating the housing of 6,435 inmate evacuees displaced as a result of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.
  - State Institutions: 3376 inmates (including post-Katrina arrestees)
  - Local Institutions: 2185 inmates
  - Federal Institution: 874 inmates

Please note that numbers provided are fluid. They are subject to change due to inmates being released on a daily basis as a result of time served, bonds posted or by court order.

- The Department is working with the Federal Bureau of Prisons to plan for the return of inmates to Louisiana as soon as reasonably possible. 874 inmates are currently being held at a federal facility in Coleman, Florida.
- Secretary Stalder was able to personally explain DOC's role as it relates to the rebuilding of criminal justice system in the greater New Orleans area to both President George Bush and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. Secretary Stalder was in Washington, D.C.

over the weekend to accept the 2005 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award, which recognizes 15 employers from around the nation for their support of the National Guard and Reserves.

- Dixon Correctional Institute continues its partnership with the Humane Society to house animals displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

- **Hunting Season Update: Seasons Opening in Some Damaged Areas**

*Source: Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries*

- The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) is reopening portions of the hunting areas and seasons that were previously closed due to the catastrophic impacts of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.
- Hunters should keep in mind that some U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service refuges continue to remain closed in the impacted areas and hunters should contact the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service for information pertaining to these seasons. Areas that are being opened are as follows:
  - Deer and rabbit hunting is hereby open effective Oct. 12, 2005 in all portions of Calcasieu, Cameron, Jefferson Davis and Vermilion parishes in southwest Louisiana previously closed because of Hurricane Rita.
  - Deer, rabbit and squirrel hunting is hereby open effective Oct. 12, 2005 in portions of Ascension, Livingston, St. John and St. James parishes north and west of U.S. Hwy 51 from U.S. 61 to Frenier Road, north of Frenier Road to Lake Pontchartrain, west of Lake Pontchartrain to Pass Manchac, south of Pass Manchac to Lake Maurepas, south of Lake Maurepas to the Blind River, south of Blind River to the Amite River Diversion Canal, south of Amite River Diversion Canal to LA Hwy 22, south of LA Hwy 22 to LA Hwy. 70 in Sorrento, east of LA Hwy. 70 to LA Hwy. 3125, north of LA Hwy. 3125 to LA Hwy. 641, north and west of LA Hwy. 641 to U.S. Hwy. 61, north of U.S. Hwy. 61 to U.S. Hwy. 51.
  - Deer and rabbit hunting was open effective Oct. 12, 2005 in portions of:
    1. Terrebonne, Lafourche, and Jefferson parishes south of the Intracoastal Waterway;
    2. Iberia and St. Mary parishes previously closed because of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita; and
    3. Plaquemines Parish west of the Mississippi River from Ollie northward.
  - In addition to the closed area in Plaquemines Parish, deer and rabbit hunting will continue to remain closed in St. Bernard Parish.

Note: As conditions improve and more surveys are conducted these areas that are presently closed may be opened for hunting at some point in the future. The availability of good escape cover and the regeneration of habitat vegetation are two factors evaluated by LDWF biologists when surveying habitat. Surveys have been conducted by biologists in Wildlife Regions 5, 6 and 7 in coordination with Scott Durham, the Deer Program manager, and Emile LeBlanc, the Deer Management Assistance Program Coordinator. Another consideration concerning deer is the need to reduce the fall population so that there is sufficient winter forage for the deer. This is especially important since the fall habitat was severely impacted by the storms.

For hunting season updates, go to <http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov>

and click on 2005-06 Hunting Season Changes under WHAT's NEW. A chart in that file lists all of the revisions to the previously announced 2005-06 season dates.

### **Updated Estimates Indicate Katrina and Rita Could Cost the State's Fisheries' Industries \$2.3 Billion Over the Next Two Years**

The Louisiana Department and Wildlife and Fisheries' preliminary estimates for storm-related fisheries' losses at the retail level could exceed \$2 billion over the next year. The latest estimates combine \$981 million in production losses for parishes affected by Hurricane Rita with the \$1.29 billion losses projected for areas damaged by Hurricane Katrina for a total of \$2.27 billion. That number represents 80 percent of the total commercial and recreational retail harvest values in 2003, based on sales levels of \$2.85 billion.

Estimates for losses from Hurricane Rita are based on analysis of fisheries resources in half of Lafourche, Terrebonne and St. Martin over a six-month period. A twelve-month recovery period was calculated for Assumption, Iberville, Pointe Coupee, St. Landry, Acadia, Avoyelles, St. Mary, Iberia, Jefferson Davis, Vermilion, Calcasieu and Cameron parishes, based on damage done by Rita in those areas. Those factors considered include the hurricane's path, aerial observations of the impacted area conducted on September 26 and 27, on the ground surveys and staff reports summarizing the status of the fishing fleet and individual commercial and recreational fishing establishments.

By comparison, Katrina's impact assessment assumed that the hurricane's impact was limited to the parishes of Orleans, Jefferson, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Tammany and half of Lafourche. LDWF also documented extensive fish kills in Tangipahoa, Livingston, Ascension, St. James, St. John the Baptist and St. Charles parishes. Estimated losses from Katrina were based on available historical data using previous losses sustained after hurricanes and landings averaged over the past five years.

"As was the case for the projections with Katrina, the estimated losses for damage done by Rita are subject to adjustment as additional aerial observations and on the ground surveys are made over the next several months," said John Roussel, assistant secretary for LDWF's Office of Fisheries.

For oysters, LDWF biologists estimated the direct loss of resource valued at \$13 million, on the public grounds, by using recently developed estimates of stock size on these grounds prior to the hurricane and previous studies of hurricane related oyster mortality (Hurricane Andrew, 1992; Hurricane Lili, 2002, Hurricane Ivan, 2004), and current mortality estimates generated from post-storm field sampling. Initial field sampling on public grounds in Terrebonne and Iberia Parishes indicated an overall mortality of approximately 30 percent. However, the most heavily impacted area, the Calcasieu Lake public oyster area in Cameron Parish, has yet to be thoroughly investigated for oyster mortalities.

To determine the impact of Katrina on oysters, the department used studies of resource mortality caused by hurricanes Ivan and Andrew to estimate mortality of existing resources. The initial estimate was a 99 percent mortality, representing a \$206 million

loss of oyster resources, in the area from Bayou Lafourche east to the Mississippi state line. LDWF field biologists are collecting and analyzing data from these areas now, and expect the actual mortality to be somewhat lower.

The Rita-related retail level losses for the oyster industry reflect a two-year projected shortfall of \$82 million when compared to the productivity of recent years. Two-year retail level losses based on Katrina's damage total \$296 million.

Recreational fisheries losses over the next year could total \$421 million at the retail level. This figure includes losses incurred by licensed charter and guide vessels operating in the severely affected parishes.

Potential retail sales losses for the state's primary fishing industries:

Category	12 Month Potential Production Losses at Retail Level KATRINA	12 Month Potential Production Losses at Retail Level RITA
Crab	\$ 81,776,427	68,255,059
Freshwater Fish	\$ 1,256,934	19,515,304
Oysters	\$ 296,427,648 *	82,287,284*
Saltwater Fish	\$ 172,145,944**	182,390,804**
Shrimp	\$ 538,996,879	380,354,398
Wild Crawfish	\$ -----	27,706,395
Recreational Fisheries	\$ 199,517,744	221,383,678
Total	\$ 1,290,121,576	981,392,606

\* Oyster losses are for two (2) years.

\*\* Includes Gulf Menhaden

Loss of infrastructure supporting the fisheries industry and long term impacts to fisheries habitat are more difficult to quantify. Infrastructure losses are characterized as lost or damaged vessels, docks, ice plants and processing facilities, but also include cold storage facilities, boat ramps, launches, marinas and bait and tackle shops. Estimates are still being calculated for infrastructure --lost or damaged by the two hurricanes.

- **National Guard**

*Source: Louisiana National Guard*

- There are approximately **12,000 National Guard soldiers** on the ground under the command of Governor Blanco.
- To date, approximately **4,000** National Guard troops have been dedicated to Task Force Rita.
- In the aftermath of Rita, the National Guard rescued approximately **2,000** citizens and delivered more than **1,400,000** MREs, **1,600,000** bottles of water, and **415,000** bags of ice to citizens in need.
- In the aftermath of Katrina, the National Guard rescued more than **4,200** citizens and delivered more than **5,000,000** meals, **6,000,000** liters of water, and **12,000,000** pounds of ice to citizens in need.

###